

Abstract

Project REAL: Responsive Education for All Learners

At no time in the education of students with disabilities has there been a greater emphasis on their academic success, and the use of evidence-based practices to achieve this outcome. In order for students with disabilities to be successful, they must have access to effective standards-based instruction in supportive educational environments. Project REAL has been designed to address the professional development and support needs of instructional personnel in Montana's schools to meet the needs of students who struggle academically and socially.

The project is designed to address three goals. They are:

Goal 1 - Capacity Building: To increase state level capacity to provide leadership, professional development, and guidance to schools to improve academic and social outcomes for students with the adoption of multi-tiered systems of academic and behavioral support.

Goal 2 - Support to LEAs. To increase the number of schools in Montana that are implementing evidence-based practices within multi-tiered models, to provide effective academic and behavioral support to all students.

Goal 3 - Low Incidence Support. To provide technical assistance and support to improve access to the general education curriculum for students who need high levels of support.

As the applicant for this project, the Office of Public Instruction will provide leadership for the activities that have been designed to address each of these goals. They will rely on partnerships with personnel at The University of Montana, Parent's Let's Unite for Kids, and the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind to guide and implement project initiatives. Implementation activities will engage a statewide network of consultants and facilitators who have been trained to support schools in adopting evidence based models and instructional strategies shown to be effective in addressing the needs of diverse students. Anticipated outcomes of this project are improved academic and social outcomes for students with disabilities, support to a statewide network of schools, and more effective services for students who need high levels of support.